



*You depend on it . . .
It depends on you . . .*

Newsletter of the North Dakota Nonpoint Source Pollution Task Force

Fall 2001

Volume 11, No. 4

TREES Program Is "Well-Rooted" in North Dakota

submitted by Jill Vigesaa, TREES Program coordinator



Tom Gibson's character, "Darin Ewe," helps students learn about natural resources.

"Judges, are you ready?" If that question makes you sit up in your chair and come to attention, chances are that you have had the privilege of being in the audience of one of two mock game shows hosted by "Darin Ewe," also known as Tom Gibson. The game shows are part of a series of conservation education programs known as The Regional Environmental Education Series or "TREES."

This program is funded by the Section 319 (Nonpoint Source Pollution Management) Program.

A record-breaking number of "TREES" programs were presented during the 2000-2001 school year. Tom Gibson presented a total of 436 programs with combined audiences totaling more than 30,000 students and educators. That number exceeds

the previous year's record by more than 70 programs and 5,000 students and educators.

The Foster County Soil Conservation District (SCD) board and staff developed the "TREES" Program more than 10 years ago. Jill Vigesaa became coordinator of the program, and Nedra Hoberg, now educational coordinator for the Eastern Grand Forks County SCD was the first presenter. Nedra presented programs such as "Sammy Soil Saver," "The Giving Tree" and "Mother Earth."

Tom Gibson, educational presenter from Bottineau, N.D., began working with the "TREES" programs in the fall of 1993, presenting his program "Sam Ting." Because of the popularity of his program and obvious educational talent, Tom was encouraged to continue developing additional characters and programs. Soon "Pete Bogg," "Darin Ewe," and "Gunnar" were added to the

(TREES...cont. on page 2)

series. Currently, schools can choose from five different programs. Many of the schools now request presentations at each grade level, with the smaller schools combining K-3 and 4-6 grade audiences.

The popularity of the programs across the state has continued to be very strong. Teachers tell of students cheering when they hear that Tom Gibson (or one of his characters) is returning to their school! Tom's

characters engage the attention of the students while teaching valuable conservation lessons. Many times an evaluation comes back with the comment: "This is the best program that we have visit our school each year! Please come again soon."



TREES programs are very popular with students throughout North Dakota.

The majority of the programs are sponsored locally by SCDs. A few schools sponsor individual programs when SCD sponsorship is not available or if they have a specific request. Financial support from both SCDs and the North Dakota Wetlands Trust is used to match the Nonpoint Source Pollution Section 319 Funding. In addition, the North Dakota Nonpoint Source Pollution Task Force recently approved the project proposal for "TREES" to continue from July 2001 through June 2006.

If you are interested in scheduling a program or would like information about programs in your area, please feel free to contact the program coordinator Jill Vigesaa at jill.vigesaa@nd.usda.gov or by calling 701.799.5488.

Upcoming Events

November 28-29, 2001 -- Four States Irrigation Council & Upper Missouri Water Association Joint Convention, Rushmore Plaza Holiday Inn, Rapid City, S.D. For more information, call the North Dakota Water Education Foundation at 701.223.4232.

December 5-7, 2001 -- Joint Annual North Dakota Water Convention and Irrigation Expo, Radisson Inn, Bismarck, N.D. For more information, call 701.223.4615

January 16-18, 2002 -- 19th Annual Red River Basin Land and Water International Summit Conference, Holiday Inn, Fargo, N.D. For more information, call 218.233.0292.



Quality Water is published quarterly by the North Dakota NPS Pollution Task Force.

North Dakota NPS Pollution Management Program Coordinator:
Greg Sandness 701.328.5232

Editor: Melissa Miller



Produced in cooperation with the North Dakota Department of Health.

West Fargo High School Wins N.D. Envirothon and Trip to Mississippi

submitted by Diane Olson, North Dakota Envirothon coordinator



The winning West Fargo team included (l to r): Brian Johnson, Brady Brodsho, James Vranish, Chad Walock, Ryan Harmon and Calvin Erickson..

The team from West Fargo High School won North Dakota's second annual Envirothon. The competition was held May 6 through 7, 2001, at Wesley Acres Bible Camp, Dazey, N.D.

The Envirothon is sponsored by the Coalition for Conservation and Environmental Education (C²E²). This group of individuals, teachers, private organizations, state and federal agencies, businesses and soil conservation districts share similar environmental goals.

Fifty-two high school students from around the state demonstrated their natural resources knowledge as they walked through three diverse outdoor trials. To complete the competition, each student gave a 15-minute oral presentation before a panel of three judges.

The Envirothon is a problem-solving, natural resources competition for high school students. Teams consisting of five members in grades nine through 12 study the subject areas of forestry, soil, water, wildlife and a current environmental issue. Team members demonstrate proven concepts of "hands-on" education, while enjoying the excitement of good competition and the fun of spending a day in the outdoors. The result is an effective educational tool, which helps schools create an environmental awareness and to meet the immediate need for more natural resource education.

With its win, the West Fargo team was given the opportunity to represent North Dakota at the National Canon Envirothon in Mississippi in July of this past year. The team finished 33rd out of 49 teams.

For more information about the Envirothon, contact Diane Olson, North Dakota Envirothon Coordinator at 701.845.1674.



And the Winners Are...

First Place Team

West Fargo High School
Advisor: Sara Forness
Sponsor: Cass County Soil

Conservation District

Team Members: Brian Johnson,
Brady Brodsho, Calvin Erickson,
Ryan Harmon, Chad Walock
Alternate: James Vranish

Second Place Team

"Oxbow" Kindred High School
Advisor: Ted Johnson

Sponsor: Cass County Soil Conservation District

Team Members: Logan Miller, Peter Rugroden, Peder Hertsqaard, Ken Anderson, Casey Odegaard

Third Place Team

"ENL" Elgin/New Leipzig High School

Advisor: Pam Hintz

Co-Advisor: Jason Mongeon

Sponsor: Grant County Soil Conservation District

Team Members: Devin Gaugler, Joel Klein, Matt Niederman, Erika Bartz, Shanna Hintz

*To learn more about the
National Canon Envirothon,
see article on page 4.*

The Envirothon -- How It All Began

The Canon Envirothon website was the source of information for this article.

The Envirothon Program started in Pennsylvania in 1979 under the name Environmental Olympics. The Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts sponsored the program as an outdoor, hands-on competition. Three districts held local competitions.

In 1980, the name of the competition was shortened to Enviro-Olympics. During the next several years, the program continued to grow slowly and in 1984, the first Pennsylvania State Enviro-Olympics were held, with six teams competing. The competition continued to expand and in 1985, the second Pennsylvania State Enviro-Olympics hosted 15 teams.

In 1988, the name was changed to the current name -- Envirothon. The program continued to grow with the first national competition held in Pennsylvania in 1988. Expansion continued with more states holding their own competitions and more teams competing at the national competition.

The 10th Anniversary National Envirothon found its way back to Pennsylvania where it all started, but this time with a new sponsor. The National Envirothon Committee (NEC) welcomed Canon U.S.A. as a sponsor. Thirty-four states and three Canadian Provinces attended the 1997 National Envirothon.

In 1998, the name was officially changed to the Canon Envirothon. In addition to Canon U.S.A., other sponsors include local conservation districts, Monsanto, the U.S. Forest

Service, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the National Association of Conservation Districts, the American Clean Water Foundation and the Soil and Water Society.

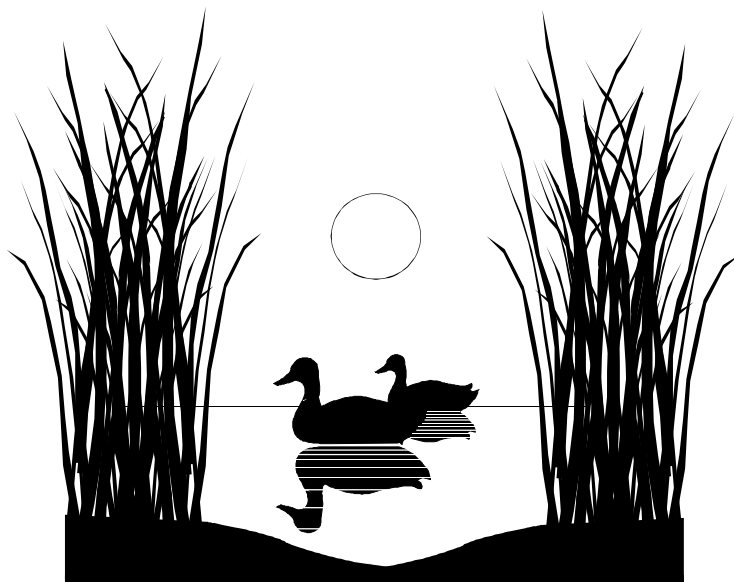
The mission of the Canon Envirothon is to develop knowledgeable, skilled and dedicated citizens who are willing to work towards achieving and maintaining a natural balance between the quality of life and the quality of the environment. This is accomplished by developing in young people an understanding of the principles and practices of resource management and ecology. The Canon Envirothon program fosters a working partnership with resource professionals and the general public to promote goals of environmental education in grades nine through 12. The program recognizes students who achieve excellence in environmental and natural resource knowledge and skills.

Each year the Envirothon touches and positively influences the lives of more than 500,000 young people across the country. That number will continue to grow as additional states become in-

involved. Inquiries also have come from around the world, including several Canadian provinces, Mexican states, Turkey, Japan and Australia. Soon those inquiries may be about...The International Envirothon! Thanks to dedicated volunteers, staff of cooperating agencies, teachers and advisors, enthusiastic students and invaluable support and sponsorship, the Envirothon has proven to be an exciting and useful tool for incorporating environmental education into high school classrooms.

The 2002 Canon Envirothon will be held at Hampshire College in Amherst, Mass., from July 29 through August 4, 2002.

For more information about the Canon Envirothon, see its website at www.envirothon.org



North Dakota Game and Fish Department Introduces Save Our Lakes Program

submitted by Jerry Stein, aquatic habitat coordinator, North Dakota Game and Fish Department

The North Dakota Game and Fish Department (NDG&F) recently has set in motion a new program called Save Our Lakes (SOL). The SOL Program seeks to develop projects and work with existing programs to enhance and restore aquatic habitat to protect North Dakota's fishery resources for the benefit of all anglers.

Most of the lakes, rivers and streams in North Dakota are suffering the damaging effects of aging. Although this aging process is natural for all bodies of water, it has been accelerated by land-use practices and pollution. NDG&F is looking at ways to stem and, in some cases, reverse the aging process through a variety of conservation measures.

One example of a rapidly aging lake is Sweetbriar Dam in Morton County. It is estimated that this reservoir receives 60,000 to 90,000 tons of sedimentation annually. That is enough sediment (mostly nutrient-rich topsoil) to cover one acre of land 31 feet deep. This does not take into account the tons of fertilizers and

pesticides applied to crops, of which large amounts end up in the lake. At this rate of sedimentation, Sweetbriar Dam will be completely filled in fewer than 60 years!

The staff of the NDG&F and cooperating agencies are working on identifying, assessing and controlling point source and nonpoint source pollution in lakes, reservoirs and associated watersheds. These agencies are following Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) guidelines and standards for clean water.

The SOL Program will focus on both in-lake and watershed activities. Various factors contributing to watershed erosion and lake sedimentation are being addressed with tools that include best management practices (BMPs), conservation easements, cooperative agreements and watershed modeling. The SOL program emphasizes projects that reduce nutrients in lakes through trapping and/or removal of sediments, in-lake noxious water evacuation,

creation of buffer strips and other standard and innovative conservation practices. Watershed projects also include noxious and invasive species prevention and control.

Through the SOL program, NDG&F hopes to implement a wide variety of tools, including creation of waste containment facilities, bank stabilization projects, sediment dredging and trapping and many other types of restoration projects. The SOL program will be able to cost-share many of these private lands projects, as well as lend technical advice. It is the intent of NDG&F to work cooperatively with local, state and federal agencies to identify funding sources and implement projects that meet the SOL goals.

To initiate the process, several lakes across the state have been identified by NDG&F staff as priority waters based on criteria such as watershed condition, recreation use and opportunity for success. Although the prioritization of lakes is part of the process, SOL involvement is not limited to identified priority projects. The program will focus on identified priority projects; however, when select opportunities arise to address problems immediately, those projects will be considered for funding. Identified priority waters and watersheds for the 2001-2002 funding cycle are listed on page 6.

(SOL...cont. on page 6)



Unprotected waterways are a leading cause of lake sedimentation.

SOL Priority Waters

<u>Reservoir</u>	<u>County</u>
Armourdale Dam	Towner
Lemmon, North	Adams
Brewer Lake	Cass
McGregor Dam	Williams
Carbury Dam	Bottineau
McDowell Dam	Burleigh
Crown Butte Dam	Morton
Mooreton Pond	Richland
Dead Colt Creek	Ransom
Raleigh Reservoir	Grant
Dickinson Dike	Stark
Sather Dam	McKenzie
Lake LaMoure	LaMoure
Velva Sportsmans Pond	Ward

If you have any questions, comments or would like to get involved in watershed and lake restoration activities, please contact Jerry Stein, Aquatic Habitat Coordinator, N.D. Game and Fish Department, 100 N. Bismarck Expressway, Bismarck, ND, 58501, 701.328.6667, or email jstein@state.nd.us

*Healthy watersheds protect
North Dakota's fisheries.*



North Dakota
Nonpoint Source Pollution Task Force
North Dakota Department of Health
Division of Water Quality
Box 5520, 1200 Missouri Ave.
Bismarck, N.D. 58504

PRST STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Permit No. 419
Bismarck, ND
Zip Code 58504